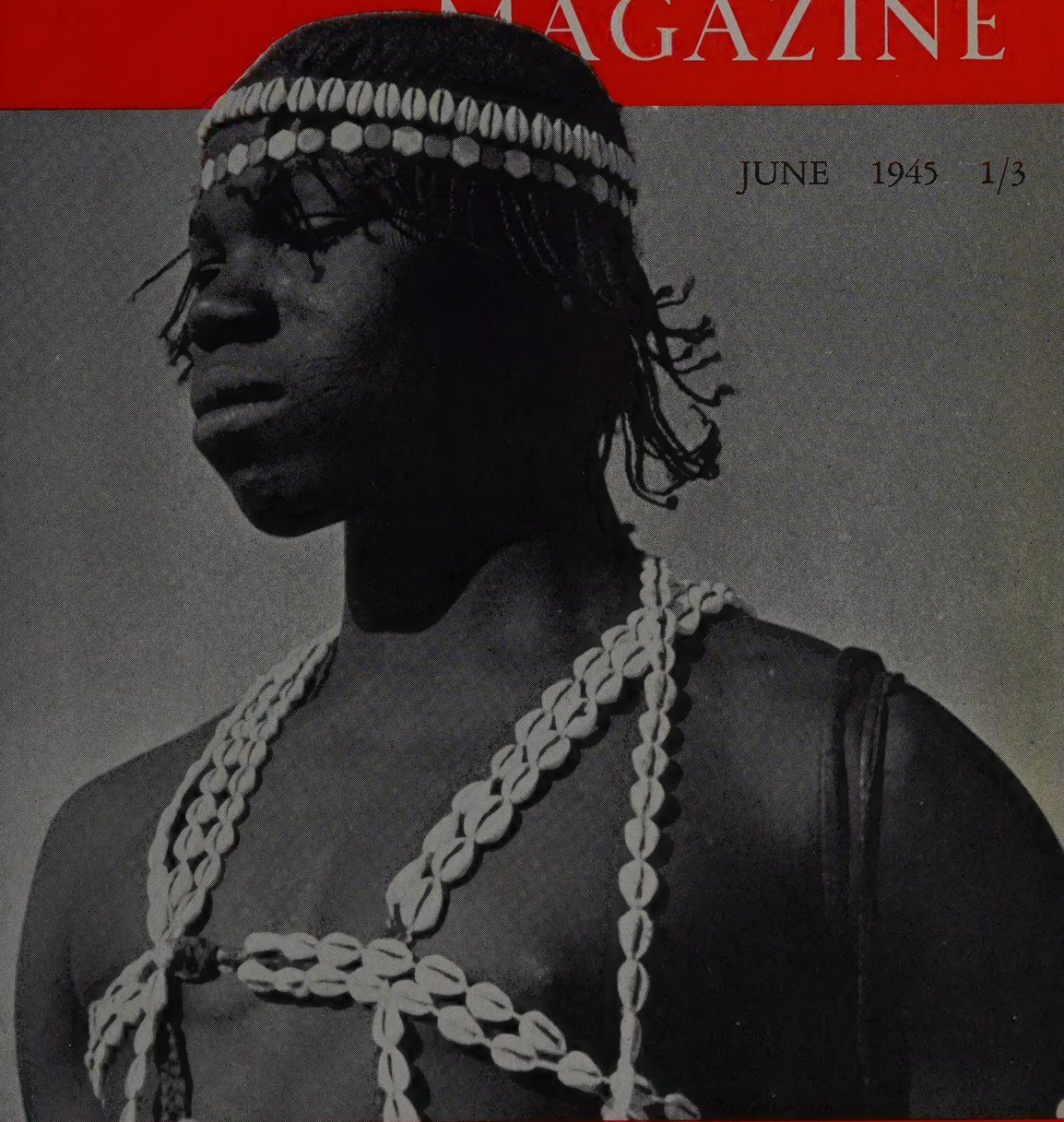


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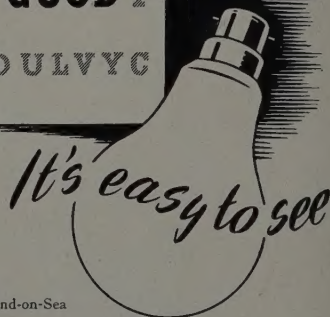
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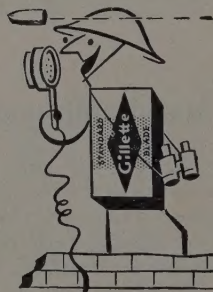
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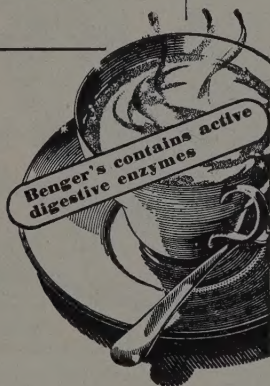
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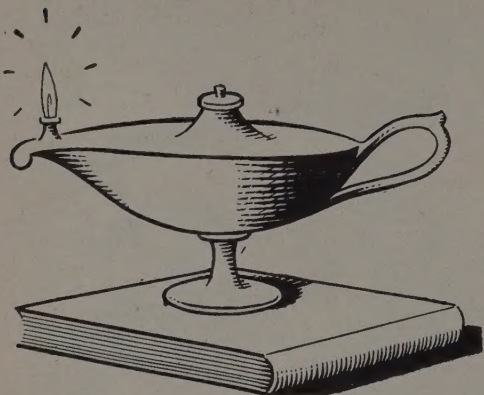


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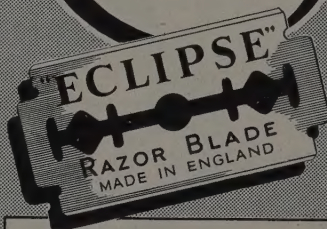
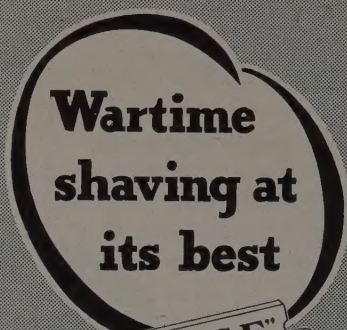
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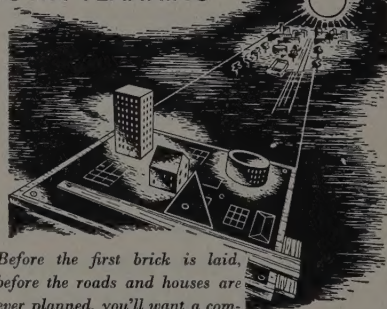
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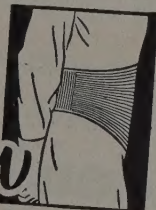
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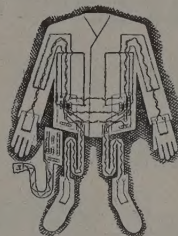
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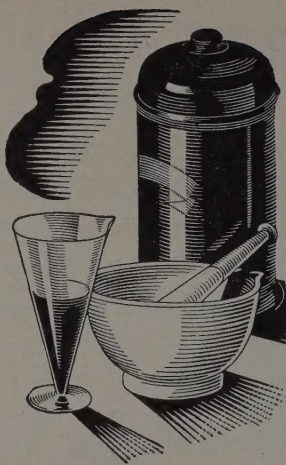


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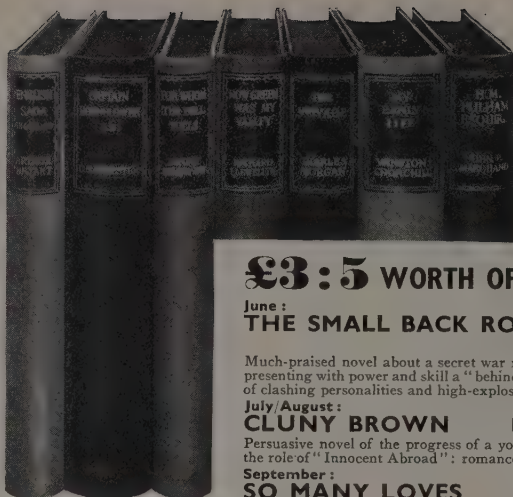
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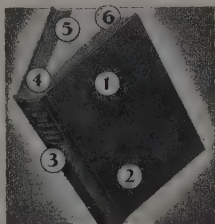
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# West Africa: a Region?

by DR JULIAN HUXLEY, F.R.S.

*Dr Huxley visited West Africa as a member of the recent Commission on Higher Education. In the following article he discusses some of the divisive forces which militate against the ideal of a common development for the whole West African region; and the unifying forces which may promote it*

THERE are two major facts about West African geography. One is the zoning of the area from humid south to arid north. The other is the existence of the Niger river system.

\* \* \*

The Niger is not among the first half-dozen rivers of the world, either in length, some 2600 miles, or in the area of its basin—over half a million square miles. Its most curious feature is that it rises less than 150 miles from the sea coast, among the mountains of Sierra Leone, and runs in a vast curve to reach the borders of the great desert before turning south-eastwards to empty itself into the sea.

The Niger ranks only third among the great African rivers, but it is unique among them in providing a passage into the heart of the continent uninterrupted by falls or cataracts. This passage is up the Niger's great eastern tributary, the Benue, and is not open through the six months or more of low water. None the less, this waterway has probably played a considerable part in bringing cultural influences from Egypt and the Mediterranean basin into the equatorial forest. There is an overland route from the upper Benue valley, south of Lake Chad, eastwards to Darfur and the eastern Sudan and so to Egypt. This was used by Rabeh, a military adventurer from what was then the Egyptian Sudan, as lately

as the last decade of the 19th century. Many other influences must have passed along this route.

It is a remarkable fact that the Niger and its course were known only by rumour to the white world up to the end of the 18th century. That there was some great river in the interior of the African bulge was conceded by everyone, but some thought it flowed west into the Atlantic, others that it flowed eastwards to join the Nile, or south-eastwards into the Congo, still others that it lost itself in the desert sands of some interior basin. Nobody seems to have suspected that the Oil Rivers included the embouchment of the Niger, although they had been known since the Portuguese discovered the coast in the 15th century, and slave-raiding and trading stations had long been established there. Even after the brave Mungo Park first established the fact that the Niger flowed to the east, when he came upon its upper reaches "glittering in the morning sun as broad as the Thames at Westminster", he still believed that it flowed into the Congo.

This strange ignorance was due to the existence of a huge delta, in country doubly inhospitable because of the climate and the native inhabitants. A network of streams and rivers covers a vast area, almost entirely swampy forest, over ten thousand square miles in extent, linking up not only with the Niger itself but with other river-systems to the west and east. To the traveller or the trader, all that was apparent was a series of gaps in the dense mangrove forest. There seemed no reason to suppose that the Nun or the Forcados had anything more to do with the Niger than had the Benue or the Cross River. Thus it was not until 1830 that the site of the outflow of the Niger into the sea was finally determined; although shortly after 1800 Reichard in Germany and M'Queen in the West Indies had concluded, largely on theoretical grounds, that it must flow into the Gulf of Guinea through a delta.

I did not see this unpleasant area myself. It is said that the mangroves may reach heights of forty feet or more, propped on their stilts in the mud. White traders made their quarters not on land but on floating hulks, moved off-shore to avoid as far as possible the 'morbific exhalations' of the swamps and the attention of the delta negroes who objected to Europeans interfering with their trade as middlemen.

\* \* \*

The zoning of the region by latitude is a commonplace of geography. It is none the less extremely striking when one is brought

up against it in person. A belt of tropical forest extends inland for varying distances all along the coast, from near the Gambia (where it is thin and patchy) to the Cameroons and beyond, where it joins the major rain-forest area of the Congo basin. (In some parts, for instance much of the Gold Coast, a drier forest-free strip occurs along the actual coast.) The tropical forest belt has been much cut over in some settled areas; but it can be impressive enough. We flew by night from the Gambia to Lagos. As we were in a flying boat, I assumed that we would follow the coast. But such is the efficiency of modern planes that an overland flight of twelve or thirteen hundred miles is nothing, and we saved two hundred miles or so by taking the direct course. All the same, I must confess to a slight shock in the morning on finding we were over heavily forested hills in Ashanti—not the ideal landing ground for a seaplane if anything went wrong. In a moment or two, however, shock had given place to delight. The tropical forest is a wonderful sight from the air. It is not a uniform carpet like a northern pine-forest, but a thing of infinite variety, owing to its many species. The heads of the trees protrude like puffs of many different shapes, sizes and colours. Some are less like puffs than rosettes—bright green these; some are brownish. The biggest trees tower above the rest, showing their white trunks. The higher hills came up to meet us, and on one of them some of the great trees were in pink blossom.

North of the rain-forest you get woodland and savannah forest, and then the monotonous orchard bush, with trees never close enough to be called a wood, save for occasional fingers of green thrusting along the streams. This parkland, as it is sometimes rather optimistically called, grows more arid and more open, and the baobab comes into its own. I cannot help having an affection for these rather monstrous and almost useless trees, they are so full of character. In the country behind Dakar I was much interested to find an area where the baobabs were so abundant that they dominated the landscape on every side.

In a morning's flight I passed from the steamy greenery of Lagos and its countryside to the plains of Kano, where the dry heat through most of the day resembled a forced draught directly out of an oven.

Still further to the north you reach steppe, steppe-desert, and the Sahara itself. Along the southern shores of this inland sea of sand, a number of empires and kingdoms have waxed and waned for over a thousand years.





Stanford, London

Their dominant religion and culture is that of Islam, carried over the desert along trade-routes of still more ancient date and maintained in large measure through the pilgrimage to Mecca. Like the Niger, they remained unknown to our western world except at second or third hand or as the subject of exaggerated legend. This was due largely to the antagonism between the Islamic and the Christian worlds, but also to the difficulties of communication. The main trade routes were north across the desert, with sparse contacts eastwards to the upper Nile. There was practically no contact westwards to the Atlantic coast. Of course some trade did exist with the non-Moslem negroes to the south, for instance in kola-nuts, but it was entirely within the West African region.

The wealth of these kingdoms depended largely on the alluvial gold-fields between the upper Senegal and Niger, and on slaves, while further eastwards they centred more on skilled craftwork and on trade, the market at Kano becoming especially famous in the 19th century.

To what a height they could attain is shown by the celebrated journey to Mecca of the negro king Mansa Musa in the 14th century. He is said to have travelled with a retinue of 60,000, among whom were 500 slaves bearing staves of solid gold weighing some five pounds. In addition, he took with him eighty camel-loads of gold-dust weighing 300 lb. apiece—the equivalent of over a million sterling. The value of the precious metal which he lavishly distributed or spent was so great that the price of gold in Egypt depreciated for a number of years. Wherever he halted on a Friday, he caused a mosque to be built.

Perhaps the most curious incident of his journey was his meeting in Mecca with a young poet and architect from Granada, El Saheli, who went back to West Africa with him and built a mosque in Gao and a mosque and a palace in Timbuktu. The remains of the palace still exist, or did recently, though as part of a slaughter-house. There is nothing extraordinary today in the fact that a distinguished British architect is now planning the



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(Left) Oil-palms in the forest zone of Southern Nigeria. The land is native-owned and the palms grow scattered in the forest, instead of in plantations as elsewhere in Africa and in Malaya. Much of the palm-oil extracted from their kernels is exported. (Below) Communications in the forest zone are hampered by dense vegetation and by the swamps, cradle of malaria and other tropical diseases. Foot-bridges, as here shown in Sierra Leone, are easily constructed; but the provision of modern roads is a serious problem. (Opposite, top) Signs of the arid north: the first date-palm, by the side of the first mosque, on the road towards Navorongo in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, through open "orchard bush" country. (Opposite, bottom) About the northern edge of the forest zone lie densely inhabited areas, largely cleared for farming. White caps worn at a busy river-crossing near Ilorin, Nigeria, show the Moslem influence prevalent in the north

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*Dr Julian Hurley*

*Lubinski*





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Two scenes from Kano Province in Northern Nigeria. (Left, top) Listening to the news broadcast from Accra: their white turbans and long robes proclaim the audience as Moslems. Since Accra in the Gold Coast has a more powerful wireless station than Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, people in the remote northern provinces often listen to Accra, which transmits in Hausa as well as in the languages of the Gold Coast forest belt. (Bottom) The Post Office, Kano City: a fine specimen, elaborately ornamented in relief, of the style of dried-mud architecture traditional in the Moslem areas of West Africa (see also the mosque on page 47). Kano City has a population of about 100,000; every house in the rabbit-warren of streets is numbered and has its own postal address. The caller's horse is a reminder that the military power of Kano and the other northern Emirates depended largely on cavalry; in the forest belt horses die of a disease conveyed by the tsetse-fly



main towns of our West African Colonies. But it is a surprise to find an early 14th-century negro king meeting a Moor from Spain in Arabia and bringing him back as an ornament to his court in one of the least-known countries of the medieval world.

At first sight, the strange thing about these empires and kingdoms is that they remained pent in their inland mystery and never extended their dominion to the coast or even near it. A prime reason seems to have been one of biological geography—the existence of the tsetse-fly in the forests. The military power of all these states depended to a great extent on cavalry: and no horse can exist in the tsetse belt. Even when the Fulani swept southwards in the early 19th century, their power petered out as they entered the forest areas, and they were never able to make good their famous oath that they would dip the Koran in the ocean.

Besides the specific effect of the tsetse, there was the general effect of the tropical forest, with its human diseases and difficulty of communication. The forest damps down human intercourse and the spread of culture as well as military conquest.

Thus the zoning of West Africa involved the virtual isolation of the inland Moslem empires from contact with Christian civilization; they were like a closed system of river-drainage, an interior basin cut off from the sea. Another strange feature of these negro kingdoms was the limited use they made of what culture-contacts were available to them from more advanced civilizations. Africa proper—black Africa south of the Sahara—never invented either the plough or a written language. Written language came to the Moslem kingdoms with their Islamization, though its use remained restricted to a small minority of learned men. But the plough did not, in spite of its immemorial use by the Mediterranean peoples; and the lands of the Melestine and Songhai empires and the Hausa States continued to be cultivated by the hoe.

In the forest zone life was difficult, with a virtual absence of domestic animals (owing to the tsetse) and a shortage of protein in the diet. In any case, the negro inhabitants had developed their own way of life, which typically, with its secret societies, its drumming and dancing, and its masks, was very different from the one Islam imposed or sought to impose. Here and there, towards the borders of the rain-forest, powerful states or cities grew up. Some of these, like Ashanti, Dahomey and Benin, were the climax of militarism on the barbaric level; the huge

armed camp of Ibadan, in Nigeria, represented the reaction of the Yorubas against the Moslem Emirs in the dry belt—the resistance of the south to encroachment from the north.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile the entry of the white man upon the scene had introduced a new principle of organization which was destined to run counter to the natural zoning. The various trading powers—notably England, France, Holland, Portugal, Denmark, Brandenburg—started to establish fortified posts along the whole West African shoreline. These included the famous ‘castles’ of the Gold Coast, as well as the fortified island of Goree off Dakar to the west, and the floating hulks off the Oil Rivers to the east. Some of these have in the course of time come under new sovereignty. Goree changed from French to British hands eleven times. The Governor of the Gold Coast lives in what was once a Danish castle, at Christiansborg.

Trading competition led to the setting-up of a patchwork of competing posts. As a result, once the European powers began to expand, their spheres of influence ran up into the interior parallel with each other. Thus European sovereignty has tended to run at right angles to the natural zones, and the political map of West Africa is an extraordinary patchwork. The French alone have succeeded in establishing a continuous area in the interior, to which they have an east-west access via the Dakar-Bamako railway. The British colony of the Gold Coast is wedged in between the parallel French blocks of Dahomey and the Ivory Coast, and the Gambia protrudes inland like a finger into the province of Senegal. At the other end of the region, Nigeria is bordered by Dahomey to the west and the French Cameroons to the east. There are no railways crossing national frontiers. When one has to visit all four of the British colonies in the region, as I did with the recent Commission on Higher Education, the patchwork nature of the political boundaries is brought home to one very forcibly. The Gambia is separated from Sierra Leone by 400 miles. Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, is 1000 miles distant from the capital of the Gold Coast at Accra. And Accra again is nearly 300 miles from Lagos, although that lies in the extreme west of the huge bulk of Nigeria.

Until recently, British West Africa was not in any sense an entity. The four territories were almost as separate politically as they were geographically. They were subject to the same central policy, framed in the Colonial Office in London, but had very little inter-



*Photographs by Dr Julian Huxley*



connection on the spot. The first step towards making a local link was taken when the Governors' Conference for the four dependencies was set up in 1939.

Since then, however, change has been rapid. In the first place, air travel has become safe and efficient. It is possible to hop in and out of planes almost as if they were buses. When I was at Achimota near Accra one evening, visiting a member of the West African Institute, an architect whom I had known in London suddenly appeared. After greetings all round, he apologized to his hostess for his unshaven appearance: he had unfortunately left his razor in South America that morning. (Actually he had left just before midnight, but his quip was essentially true.)

The enormous flow of American planes on the great West African route along the West African bulge and up to Egypt and the East

must be seen to be believed. While French West Africa was under Vichy control, all the aerodromes had to be off French territory. There are big ones in the Gambia and near Sierra Leone, and we looked down once from our plane at the base established under American auspices at Fisherman's Lake in the negro republic of Liberia. Accra has a vast aerodrome, and there are others strung out diagonally all across Nigeria.

The aeroplane will have an immense effect on West African life, and one not confined to Europeans. Names for it are appearing all along the coast: I was delighted with the term in Gold Coast pidgin—"breeze-wagon for up". Travelling with me in the Kano plane was a family of Syrian traders from Lagos going back to Syria (the Syrian, it should be noted, occupies the same sort of position in West Africa as does the Indian in East Africa, though he is more restricted to

*An atmosphere of mystery and horror pervades religion in the forest zone, contrasting sharply with the Moslem north. (Below) A row of images, representing various spirits, in a bush path off a main road in South-Eastern Nigeria. (Opposite) The priestess at the crop-fertility temple in Ibadan, Nigeria, a city of 400,000 inhabitants. The sacred wrought-iron staves are so charged with sanctity that they had to be stood on a piece of sheet-iron to prevent a short-circuit with the earth*





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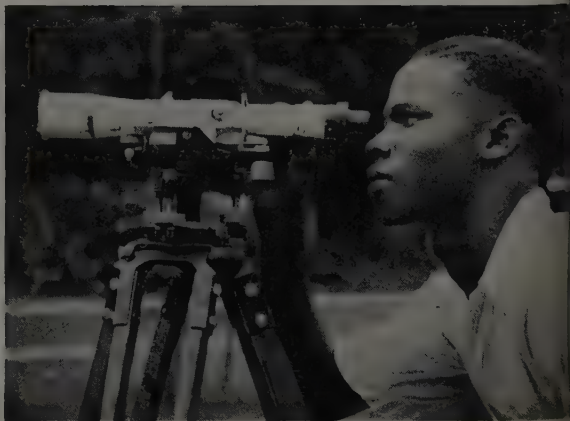
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trade). At Kano itself, I found that the Law School had just closed and that the day before my arrival two Mallams—learned men corresponding to professors—had gone back to their homes in Khartoum by air.

The other great change was due to the war. West Africa acquired urgent importance in various ways—on account of the great harbour in Sierra Leone; of the air route to the East already mentioned; of the tin from the Bauchi plateau in Nigeria, the ground-nuts, the rubber and other vital supplies. The coal from the mines at Enugu, it was suddenly realized, might be useful outside Nigeria. Men were being enlisted to serve in the Far East, and the general defence situation was ticklish so long as French West Africa was under Vichy control.

To help in the coordination of these problems, the new and ingenious device already adopted for the Middle East was applied to West Africa, and a Resident Minister of

Cabinet rank appointed. The Governors' Conference mentioned above was incorporated in 1942 into his organization; becoming, under his chairmanship, the Civil Members' Committee of the West African War Council.

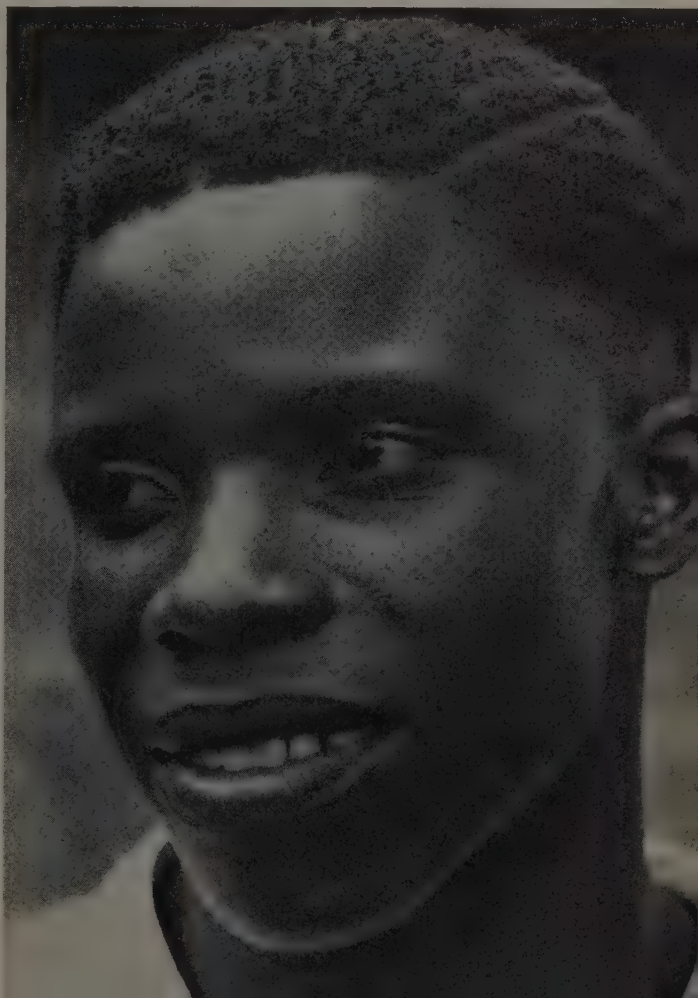
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No steps yet taken, or projected, towards regionalization are likely to go very far in promoting a regional consciousness, a sense of being West African. It is indeed equally likely that a continental consciousness, a sense of being *African*, is destined to spring up, just because it is more general.

The geographical facts are against the rapid growth of a specifically regional consciousness. There is first the size of the region. From Cape Verde in the west to Lake Chad in the east you traverse more than 30 degrees of longitude—more than a twelfth of the way round the world on this parallel (and when you have reached Lake Chad you

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(Opposite) 1. *The hand-weaving industry of the Yoruba people in South-Western Nigeria, formerly declining, has been stimulated by the war. Yarn made from Nigerian cotton is used, and dyed with local dyes.* 2. *The present Oni of Ife, sacred city of Yorubaland, was once a station-master. He and his counsellors form the nucleus of the local administration. The Oni is selected by traditional methods from a number of possible candidates.* 3. *Broadcasting from Accra in Twi, one of the three main languages of the coastal belt. The announcer is wearing the toga-like 'cloth', with one shoulder bare, traditional among many tribes of the Gold Coast forest area.* 4. *Driver E. A. Joseph oils his engine on the Nigerian railway. There is no colour-bar in West Africa and many Africans receive technical instruction at railway workshops. A large increase in technical education in all the British territories is contemplated.* 5. *As the scale of development grows, public works and municipal employment will furnish more jobs for trained Africans. A civil engineering pupil attached to the technical staff of the Lagos Town Council.* (Right) *A keen young teacher at the government school at Awka, Nigeria. To provide universal primary education will require more than ten times the existing number of teachers*





Fox Photos



Dr Julian Huxley

(Above, top) Open-air cafés and other notes of France abound in Dakar, capital of French West Africa. The famous Czech shoe firm, Bata, has branches in most large towns in West Africa. (Bottom) Among the nations which established 'castles' or fortified trading posts along the West African coast were the Danes. They built Christiansborg Castle, near Accra, now used by the Governor of the Gold Coast as his residence

are still well short of being half-way across the continent). The enormous size of the West African bulge is emphasized by the length of time taken by the Portuguese explorers to round it. The first voyage sent out under the auspices of Henry the Navigator was in 1415. The explorers did not reach Cape Blanco until 1441. The Senegal river, near the northern border of negroland, was not discovered till 1445, and only by 1480, twenty years after Henry's death, was the whole Guinea Coast known. Sixty-five years of expeditions to reach the main stem of the continent and the vicinity of the equator, and to pave the way for Diaz's great voyage to the Cape. . . .

But more serious are the facts of human and political geography. There is no *lingua franca* such as is provided by Swahili in East Africa. Hausa is spoken by a considerable number of people, but only in the north. The unifying force of Islam is again confined to the north, and in any case has not the dynamic vigour it possesses in some other parts of the world. From the regional point of view religion is a dividing influence. In Nigeria, as the educated Christians came up from the south to find posts, there was a tendency for the Moslems to despise them as their former slaves. (In the early days of our administration of Northern Nigeria, clerks were imported from the Gold Coast to obviate this.) And the mission-educated southerner in his turn often looked down on the 'infidels'. There are fifteen distinct languages spoken in Sierra Leone, which is no larger than Southern Ireland. Even where slightly larger linguistic units exist, as in the forest area of the Gold Coast, they compete and overlap.

The political units were even smaller. To take Sierra Leone again, it comprised over 200 separate 'sovereign states', owning no common allegiance. The units are also extremely diverse in type, from naked pagans to large Moslem emirates, from small cannibal tribes to elements of powerful confederations like the Yoruba. It is these separate native powers which, under the principle of Indirect Rule, are made the units of administration. They have a ruler and a council, and the political consciousness of the people is focussed on them.

On top of this multiplicity of language and sovereignty (however restricted the latter may now be) is the diversity of the European powers. Broadly speaking, West Africa is parcelled out between France and Britain. Even if France gives up her policy of direct rule coupled with assimilation of the *élite*, in favour of something more like our indirect



rule, French will remain the official language, one of the main goals of the educated minority in her territories. Thus European language barriers will be imposed on African.

The bulk of West Africans for decades to come will find abundant outlets for their energy in the battle for a fuller life. They are discovering that, with the aid of Europeans, they can free whole areas from tsetse, can reduce disease and parasites, can build up both a healthier and more profitable agriculture, can have access to Western education, can improve administration in their Native Authorities. The realization, both by Europeans and Africans, that progress can now only be made by training large numbers of Africans to a high level, is one of the major changes of the present century. Africa can only develop through the large-scale participation of Africans.

Wherever regional institutions can be developed they will obviously be useful. As part of the coordinating machinery established in the British territories under the Resident Minister, a town planning adviser and a development adviser have been working in the area, and the regional institution known as IWAISS (Institute of West African Arts, Industries and Social Studies—or more conveniently the West African Institute) is beginning to do useful work.

It is noteworthy that the French have established an institution of somewhat similar scope—IFAN, or Institut Français de l'Afrique Noire—and that this has just held a

conference at Dakar, at which as many as possible of the territories of West Africa were represented, and a number of papers were presented by specialists from the British colonies. In discussing the future of the West African Institute, many of the indigenous spokesmen have shown consciousness of the value of transcending the boundaries of single territories. As colleges and technical institutes are set up and reach higher standards, there is bound to be a flow of students from different territories. It will not be on the scale of the student movements of the Middle Ages, but it will be something.

Moreover, we can entertain a reasonable hope that at the highest level development may be coordinated in a common plan. Further steps towards regionalization might include constant consultation between the Resident Minister's organization and the French authorities; and the establishment of a Regional Council, as already adumbrated by the Colonial Secretary in the House of Commons, to comprise not only Powers with dependencies in the region, but those with some special strategic or other interest—for instance, the United States, which is already cooperating with British administrators to promote regional development in the Caribbean.

Meanwhile we have the Colonial Development Fund. The more planning there is about the expenditure under the fund, and the more the Africans can be made to feel that they are partners in this planned enterprise, the better.

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*Mallam Umar Yakub, Treasury Accountant of the Native Administration headquarters of the Shehu of Bornu, in North-Eastern Nigeria. The annual revenue of the Native Treasury is about £250,000. The accountant is being consulted by the 'Pilgrims' Scribe', who handles the business of the many people making the pilgrimage from Bornu to Mecca, sometimes spending several years on the journey. Before leaving they must make a deposit to provide against destitution on return*



# The Character of England in Maps. II

by EDWARD LYNAM, D.Litt., F.S.A.

*Our May number contained the first part of Dr Lynam's survey of the changes which the centuries have wrought in the face of England, as recorded in contemporary maps. It will be continued later*

THE Royal Forests which our Norman kings once preserved for their private pleasure all over England were neither thickly wooded nor uninhabited. They were great tracts of land containing woods, marshes, parklands and pasture, interspersed with pieces of open communal ploughland and meadow surrounding small settlements. The latter were usually made Manors of the Crown and granted to feudal tenants, who thus became Lords of one or more Manors. While the freemen and villeins under them had their own manorial courts, they were also subject to the Forest Laws. The King's Verderers watched that they took no beast of the chase (the red deer, fallow deer, roe and wild boar), and the Woodwards that they took no timber, quick or dead, from the surrounding forest. Certain of the forests were not, however, strictly preserved, and in these inclosures were permitted from the 14th century onwards. Feckenham, in Worcestershire, is a case in point. By 1560 many of the inhabitants of Feckenham parish had obtained security of tenure, not only of their cottages and gardens but of some small hedged fields, usually holding them by copyhold or manorial custom, or by a lease of so many lives. The scarcity both of tenants and of labourers which followed upon the Black Death had transformed many of the feudal villeins into prosperous tenant farmers, while others had become yeoman freeholders.

In 1591 Queen Elizabeth granted her Manor of Feckenham to her Calvinistic adviser, Sir Francis Knollys. Knollys, who was a shrewd business man, promptly had it surveyed, and fortunately employed for the task John Blagrave, "the flower of mathematicians of his age". Blagrave's large coloured MS. map gives a very instructive picture of a Forest Manor in Tudor times, including the sub-manors of Northgrove, Astwood and Edgioc. It bears, too, a detailed list of all the landholders and of their holdings. The custom had long existed of leasing out remote estates to local franklins; and Humphrey Jennetts, Esquire, whose

ancestors had been freeholders at Northgrove for two centuries, appears here as the sub-Lord of Feckenham. The Lord's Demesne lands are marked with an A+, the Lord's Wastes with +, lands belonging to the corporate Parish with H, the "Common Fields, Meadows and Closes", in which almost every villager had a share, with a \*, while every landholder is denoted by letters of the alphabet. The Manor House had been burned down earlier, but the Court House and the Mill, both of them the Lord's property and both once very profitable to him in fees, are shown here. The Court House had originally been a prison, where the Forest Justices tried and incarcerated poachers; the Mill still stands on Himble Brook but now it turns out needles. Blagrave does not show the stocks nor the "ducking-stool", and does not mention any craftsman's shop except the smith's, although the people of Feckenham must then have been as self-supporting as those of thousands of other remote villages, making their own clothes, shoes, furniture and implements, and building their own houses of timber, lath and clay. On the map all the houses have red-tiled roofs and white-washed walls, but the roofs were probably of wooden shingles, painted. Colour conventions for maps were now established, and Blagrave followed them, except that his "best Corn Ground is a Green Corn Colour, furrowed". He was exceptional for his time in that he used the Statute perch of sixteen and a half feet throughout this map. Then and for long afterwards a "woodland perch", usually eighteen feet in length but twenty-five in some districts, was used for forests, while the Lord was often allowed a perch of twenty feet in computing his demesne.

The Manor, with its sub-manors, contained 7285 acres, of which just one half was enclosed and used severally by sixty-four persons, 1460 acres were the Lord's demesne, 675 the Lord's wastes, here mainly woods and coppices, and 1517 common or "Open" fields. The Vicar is one of the few freeholders mentioned. He had the Vicarage,







British Museum

The Town and Castle of Hertford, inset on John Speed's map of the County in his atlas, *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, 1610. Buildings are shown in plan-profile, as was the custom in the 16th and 17th centuries. The "pases" used in the scale were geometrical paces of five feet each

the fringe of the woods. They were often the work of poor men who, sometimes after paying the Lord a small rent, sometimes without permission, laboriously cleared a site for a hut and garden for their families. In such of the woods and lanes as were "the Lord's wastes" the "commoners" of the village had rights of pasturage; indeed these wastes are now our commons.

Very few plans of English towns showing details of the streets and buildings that lay behind the walls can have been drawn in the 13th and 14th centuries. Under that many-talented champion of the Renaissance, Henry VIII, appeared some rather flamboyant sketches of towns; but by 1570 these had given way to "bird's-eye views" in which plan and elevation were charmingly combined. It was John Speed the Merchant Taylor who published the first comprehensive collection of plans of English towns. In his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (1610-11) he engraved, inset on each county map, an artistic bird's-eye view of the shire capital. Hertford had long been noted for its Royal castle, in which both King John of France and King David of Scotland had been imprisoned, but by 1610 it was becoming ruinous, and soon afterwards

Charles I gave it to the Earl of Salisbury. Already, however, just as the country people had helped to make an end of the feudal system, so in the corporate towns individual craftsmen began to find themselves restricted by Gild regulations and to set up rural industries of their own. Standing in a rich corn country already grown prosperous on barley, Hertford was a great brewing centre. The River Lea—seen flowing in from the south-west and feeding the Castle moat—was navigable all the way from London and supplied an excellent means of transport, even though the millers further south, at Enfield and Waltham, often tried to obstruct the river traffic. The course of the river at Hertford has now altered.

Two small and ancient churches, St Mary's and St Nicholas's, shown here one on each side of the river, have since disappeared, but squat-towered St Andrew's and lofty All-hallows are both very old. The town Cross, marking a very early market-place, the Mill Bridge and Cow Bridge are still there, and so are most of the streets, though the buildings are different; soon after 1610 Hertford lost much of her industrial eminence to Ware, which stood on busy Ermine Street and on the





*From An Exact Survey of certayne landes in the parish of Northiam belonging unto Thankefull Frewen gent, by Giles Burton, 1635. The map was made by impressing delicate woodcut stamps of such features as trees, houses, human beings and so forth over penced outlines*

Lea below where the Beane and the Maran swell it. In the open space between H and L Speed has drawn a round market-house and two long roofed shelters, which seem to indicate that the site of the market-place of 1610 is still unchanged. His High Street is now Fore Street, a name which may reflect the citizens' pride in the noble façades of their main street, standing out in lofty lines. The "pases" used by Speed in his scale were geometrical paces of five feet each.

After 1570 the wealth of the country and its power, commercial as well as political, began to be concentrated in London; and with better communications and a growth both of unrest and of ambition among the rural population, in part a consequence of the inclosing policy of the new landlords, more and more country people went to seek their fortune in the capital. The Frewens seem to have come there from Worcestershire about 1570, and in 1583 John Frewen obtained the living of Northiam in Sussex and founded a notable family. Of his sons, the eldest, Accepted, became Archbishop of York, Thankefull became secretary to the Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal, and Stephen Master of the Skinners' Company and husband of a

Sussex heiress. Thankefull throve, and in 1635 he had a map made of his estates in Beckley, Newenden and Northiam, where his brother John was Rector and husband of another local heiress. It is signed by Giles Burton. Estate maps of this peaceful and prosperous period are gay and colourful, characterized by many artistic little pictures of farm animals and of peasants ploughing, harvesting and carting. The extract from the map shows Northiam church, the Rectory and the surrounding fields, hedges, woods and roads. The acreage of each field is inscribed in a scroll, its number in the estate terrier in a circle, and pasture land is indicated by the figure of a cow, horse or sheep. Thankefull Frewen's religious convictions are evident from the Puritans, wearing black tunics and baggy knee-breeches, broad-brimmed hats and square-toed shoes, who stand in front of their houses. Yet in 1635 Herrick was writing his happy lyrics, and Northiam had hardly yet been disturbed by self-appointed reformers. On holy-days the villagers probably turned out and "danced the hey with nimble feet", not caring at all whether they were "accepted" or no.

This map is unique in that practically every





one of its features was stamped upon it with a specially cut wooden stamp. The map-maker—whoever he was, for Giles Burton may only have been the surveyor—must have begun with a map finely drawn in pencil. With a pen he wrote in carefully the title and all the parcel and acreage numbers, and then drew the church. Thereafter he used some dozen tiny stamps, pressing each in turn over the pencilled outlines on the parchment until the map was completed. His last task was to colour it delicately in wash, following the colour conventions,—cream walls and red roofs, leaden blue for the church roof, dusty-yellow for the roads, and so on. Very many of the Puritans loved the arts as deeply as Milton did, but they unfortunately made themselves judges of which arts were “ungodly”.

In the same year, just after the publication of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* and seven years before civil war broke out, Moses Glover, “Paynter and Architect”, drew and coloured on parchment a map of the Hundred of Isleworth, showing the villages of Isleworth, Brentford, Hounslow, Heston and Twickenham on a scale of about twenty inches to the mile. To include everything he had to take liberties with the points of the compass, orienting his map with the top at south south-west, so that the north is at the lower right-hand side. In compensation he has supplied a multitude of details of extraordinary interest to the student of the economic and social history of that district. Braynforde (Brentford), both Oulde and New, lay on a main highway which led from London and Kensington to the southern and western counties. For centuries it saw innumerable travellers come and go to the capital, seven miles away. Royalty, nobility and Mr Pepys drove through it, and Harry and Frank Esmond galloped through it on their midnight chase of the amorous Prince James Edward to Castlewood; but plainer persons stopped there for refreshment or a bed, and were welcomed by inn-keepers and often by thieves. Glover shows us three inns, of which the Doves, then generally called the Pigeons, was the chief. One of its landlords, John Lowin, was an actor who

knew Ben Jonson and had played parts in Shakespeare's plays. “We will turn our courage to Braynford . . . my bird of night, to the Pigeons”, wrote Jonson in the *Alchymist*, and Shakespeare too must often have visited Brentford, which had a very popular four-day fair. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* Falstaff's lady friends propose to dress him up as the famous witch of Brentford. Witches were not peculiar to Brentford, for a century later Addison wrote that no English village was without its reputed witch; but bright ladies, like Harrison's “walking mortes, kinching cooes and demanders for glimmer”, were probably not unknown there.

The Market where the weekly market was held is seen conveniently close to the Doves. The houses in Old Brentford are fine specimens of timber buildings of the late 16th century, when English building carpenters were “worthily preferred before those of like science among all other nations”. They were roofed with tiles. The number of wharves along the backwater between the Brent and the Thames testifies to the industry of Brentford and to the great use made of water transport. The timber-yard and the brewery depicted by Glover have continued to flourish for three centuries. He also indicates clearly the uses to which all the land, most of it enclosed fields, was put by its owners or tenants. While the swampy ground beside the rivers was evidently only fit for pasture, the higher fields were all cultivated. Their produce was used chiefly for home consumption or for sale locally; but several new vegetables, such as cauliflowers and turnips, and commercial market gardening to supply the needs of London, had just been introduced by Dutch immigrants.

The Nunnery at Sion was a house of English Bridgetines. In 1539 its lands and revenues were taken over by Henry VIII, who later imprisoned his fifth wife, Catherine Howard, there before he executed her. The nuns fled to Flanders, but soon afterwards established themselves at Lisbon, where the ‘English Sisters’ remained until 1809, when they returned to England. Edward VI granted Sion to his uncle and ‘Protector’, Somerset, the man who attempted to establish Protestantism in England by brute force. After his death it went to John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland. He was even more thorough, though for different ends, than Somerset, and planned, when Queen Mary came to the throne, to replace her by her sixteen-year-old cousin, Lady Jane Grey—and, incidentally, by his own family. He married Jane to his son, Guildford, and bringing her to Sion House in 1553,

(Opposite) *From a reproduction of a manuscript map of the Hundred of Isleworth or Isleworth, drawn and coloured in 1635 by Moses Glover, Paynter and Architect, for Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. The Earl was Lord of the Manor of Sion, and the original was long kept at Sion House. The north is at the lower right-hand side of the map*



*A reduced reproduction of another part of Glover's map of the Hundred of Isleworth (see page 60). The Hundred included the villages of Isleworth, Brentford, Hounslow, Heston and Twickenham. (Opposite) Part of the Road from York to West-Chester in John Ogilby's Britannia, 1675, the first road-atlas of its kind in the world. Each strip reads from the bottom upwards, beginning left*

forced her, in spite of her entreaties, to accept the rôle of rival Queen. But his rebellion failed completely, and Jane Dudley and all her leaders, including Sir Thomas Wyatt of Allington, were executed. In 1559 Queen Elizabeth gave Sion to Sir Francis Knollys as keeper; but in 1604 James I granted it, with the Manor of Isleworth, to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, whose descendants had possessed it ever since. Somerset had built a mansion there, which Henry Percy and his son greatly enlarged. They surrounded it, too, with flower gardens full of tulips and other new flowers introduced into England by the Huguenots, and with "alleys" in the style approved by Lord Bacon. It was almost certainly Henry Percy, a great patron of the arts, who commissioned Glover to make this map, which was exhibited in Sion House for nearly three centuries.

The road shown on the map running from

the Brent Bridge past Sir Richard Wynn's house branched into two at Hounslow (as it still does), one branch, an old Roman road, continuing west-south-west to Staines, Salisbury and Cornwall, the other running west-north-west to Colnbrook, Gloucester, Bristol and Wales. At Hounslow Glover shows us not only the diverging roads but no less than six inns in the village, the 'King's Head' having a large, swinging signboard. Travelers stayed at Hounslow as much from caution as from weariness, for the high 'waste' of Hounslow Heath was not to be ventured upon without a guard. And some of the innkeepers who gave their guests a hearty "God speed" in the morning had already sent full information about them to "the confederacy". The great four-horse waggon on the Colnbrook road, the leading horse with a be-ribboned horn between his ears, was typical of the vehicles which, in ever-increasing





numbers, had been grinding down the surface of English roads since 1350. Here, however, gravel pits lay only a few hundred yards away, so that the road could be easily repaired. "Cuckcouds Haven" looks much too cheerful to be what its name implies. Actually, here and in many other places where the name occurs, it had been altered from "Cuckoos" by rustic humourists. The great field of 188 acres, "Heston Town Field, Arable", was a survival of the old Open Fields, but was apparently no longer divided into individual strips, as so many Open Fields still were in the Midlands. The map shows one man ploughing, and the field was probably cultivated on the three-field system. But it was already threatened with extinction by the country villas and gardens of the nobility who preceded Horace Walpole at Twickenham and its neighbourhood.

At the Restoration our Parliament, mindful of the unruly ways of the early Stuarts, promptly took into its own hands the control of the economic policy, both domestic and foreign, of the country. Very soon her industries and commerce—in which many members of both Houses, imbued with the new ideas of scientific experiment and of capitalism, had private interests—began to expand greatly. But trade depends on transport, and many English roads had become no more than great scars, muddy and rutted, across the landscape. Accordingly in 1663 the Turnpike Act was passed, permitting the formation of Turnpike Trusts to undertake their repair in return for the right to levy tolls; but these effected very little at first. Travel was further complicated by the complete absence of road-maps, so that local guides—sometimes, as in Pepys' case, obliging innkeepers—had to be found, while the varying lengths of local miles caused disputes over the charges made for hiring coaches.

In the 1670's John Ogilby, a man of remarkable versatility, obtained the King's approval to have all the chief roads of England and Wales surveyed. His surveyors measured the road-distances with a "perambulator" or measuring wheel with a circumference of 8 ft. 3 ins. and a register, and they reckoned only in statute miles, ignoring the local or "vulgar" miles. The results were published in 1675 in a handsome folio road-atlas entitled *Britannia* which depicted all the chief roads in continuous strips on 100 plates. In order to fit the necessary number of strips into each plate, Ogilby had to represent each stretch of road as comparatively straight; but he placed little compass-roses at intervals, and these indicated all the bends. Thus, in the extract

shown on page 63, the general direction from Morley to Rochdale is South of West. The miles from York are numbered, the little dots in the road denote furlongs and every manor-house, stream or cross-roads which would enable the traveller to fix his position is marked. Though ancient "pack-ways" for horses appear on our old maps, and some of them are, in fact, our modern "foot-paths", Ogilby shows none here. He gives, however, glimpses of the fine old church at Birstal, of Chastleton Hall, then the property of Lord Byron, ancestor of the poet, of "Bating's Inne", a welcome haven for wayfarers crossing the wild pass of Blackstone Edge, and generally of a hilly, moorish country with small stone-quarries and shallow coal pits, inhabited mainly by Dissenters.

Fifty years later a vast rural industry in cloth had developed in this district, and the neighbouring towns, Halifax, Bradford and the rest, had become the chief centre of the English woollen manufacture. One principal cause of this was the action of Parliament, which forbade the import of cloth and the export of raw wool, extinguished for ever the flourishing Irish cloth industry and even enacted that everybody should be buried in English wool. About 1720 Defoe found the whole country west of Halifax "one continuous village", with every house full of people carding, spinning, weaving, scouring, dressing and dyeing. Agriculture they were beginning to abandon, for they made enough money to buy most of their food. Their finished cloth they sent to the market at Leeds, whither came buyers from the Continent, from London and from many parts of England, and carried away their purchases on droves of pack-horses.

Ogilby's *Britannia* was not only the first road-atlas of its kind in the world, but the harbinger of a new era of communication, discovery and industrial and commercial activity in England. It was followed by a long succession of road-atlases, more detailed and more convenient in size, which continued in use right down to the time when the Pickwick Club enlivened the English countryside.

The England of Matthew Paris, a conquered country covered with castles, abbeys and walled towns and ruled by powerful individuals and corporate bodies, is in striking contrast to the England depicted by Glover and Ogilby. In 1675 the English people had become a nation. They had discovered their rich and beautiful island, and were asserting their rights to make the most of it. Their subsequent difficulties in doing this were largely of their own making.





*By courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art*

## Aspects of Brazil

*During the 18th century a stream of gold filled the mining towns of Minas Geraes with architectural treasures. The town of Ouro Preto, declared a national monument in 1933, preserves many baroque façades and sculptures of Antonio Francisco Lisboa, the famous "Little Cripple"*







*Photographs by Cassie Gaisford*

*From two races—the aboriginal Indian of forest and shore and the Portuguese adventurer—springs this smiling jangadeiro of Brazil's north-east coast. (Opposite) The fisherman mends his bait basket, seated on his jangada of balsawood logs; a raft-like yet wonderfully stable, sailing vessel in which he braves the fiercest tropical storms, far out to sea*



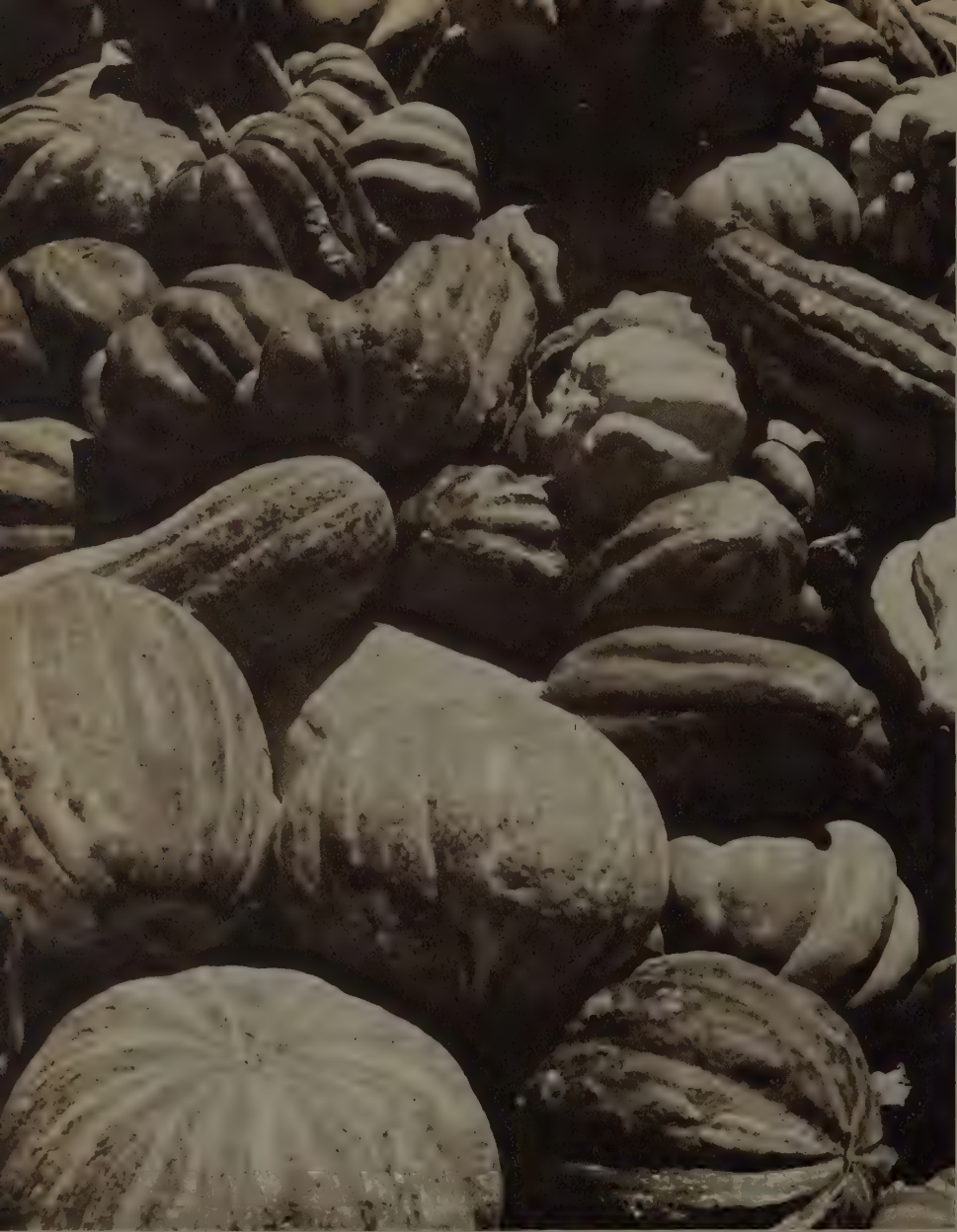
*By courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art*





*Cassie Gaisford*

Those who have "never sailed the Amazon" may imagine themselves leaning over the rail while supplies of fruit—melons, papaws, mangoes—are taken aboard at a port in the great river. (Opposite) Two thousand miles and more to the southward, "great steamers, white and gold," glide upon the waters beneath the Sugar Loaf in Rio de Janeiro Bay, overlooked by residences designed in the distinctive modern Brazilian style. The visit of Le Corbusier as consultant in 1936 marked a new movement in Brazilian architecture; and his ideas have been absorbed and developed by an active band of followers in solving the climatic problems of violent heat and light



*Photographs by Cassie Gaisford*

*The rolling open plains of Brazil, the sertão, breed a man of great endurance and energy, the sertanejo. He may be a cattle-breeder, cotton-planter, gold-miner or diamond-pro prospector. Here he is homebound after a shopping expedition*







(Above) Shaded from deep red down to pale yellow, these strange mounds are no wonder of nature. A great new highway, that required much digging and levelling, runs to Belo Horizonte, capital of the State of Minas Geraes; and the local contractor left the mounds to show the depths of earth removed

(Right) Belo Horizonte is a new city, 350 miles north of Rio, 3,000 feet above the sea. In its construction the talents of Oscar Niemeyer, a pupil of Le Corbusier, have had full play; to them is due the bold outline of the Island Restaurant on Belo Horizonte's artificial lake



Photographs by courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art



# Cormorant Fishing in South China

by CAPTAIN J. H. PRATT

ONCE every year in the village of Sai Hong, Fukien, South China, offerings are made in an ancestral temple to the memory of a certain government official called Lin. He was not one of the village ancestors, but there are special reasons for remembering him there and wishing him good luck. Centuries ago Mr Lin employed as his servant a man from this village. Unfortunately the master lost his official appointment and could neither afford to keep a retainer nor make him a gift of money at parting. Yet Mr Lin gave his servant something of more lasting value: a couple of cormorants, which, after a long and arduous journey from far-away Shansi, finally arrived in this South Fukien village. The descendants of these birds are still living, and indeed are the villagers' main source of livelihood, so that the yearly offering in memory of Mr Lin has good reason behind it.

The Chinese cormorant to be seen in this village is similar in appearance to the European bird, though it has been separated by naturalists into a sub-species with the alarming title of *Phalacrocorax cabo subcormoranus*. It occurs all over China in its wild state, and all over China the Chinese have tamed it, teaching it to catch fish in a most efficient way.

At night the birds are kept in separate conical baskets or covers and do not roost together like chickens. This is because cormorants are pugnacious and would do each other harm if they were not kept apart. If they meet each other on land, they usually start to fight, though they will sit quietly enough on a pole when being carried by the fishermen to the fishing grounds.

Before the work of the day begins, each bird has a ring made of tough grass fastened round its neck: the ring is so adjusted that the bird can swallow only small fish the size of minnows, and is quite unable to get down anything larger. Besides the ring round his neck, the bird has also a ring attached by a short piece of twine to his foot, and by means of this the fisherman can hook the bird out of the water if necessary. The ring round the bird's neck does not appear to cause it any inconvenience, for the fishermen are careful

not to injure the birds which work so hard for them.

As a rule, a raft is made of four bamboos from four to five inches in diameter and about twenty-four feet long. The bamboos have been peeled of their outer skin to make their surface rough, they are lashed together and are slightly curved upwards at each end. The fisherman stands barefooted in the middle of his raft and is almost on a level with the water. His equipment consists of a large basket for the fish, a large net, a kind of boat-hook with a landing net attached, a long bamboo pole and the cormorants. With the pole the raft is propelled more quickly than any punt, and in deep water the fisherman swings it paddle fashion, a feat which requires much skill. The pole is also used for pushing the cormorants from the raft into the water. It is employed, too, to frighten the fish by beating the water and it acts as a kind of anchor when the raft is stationary.

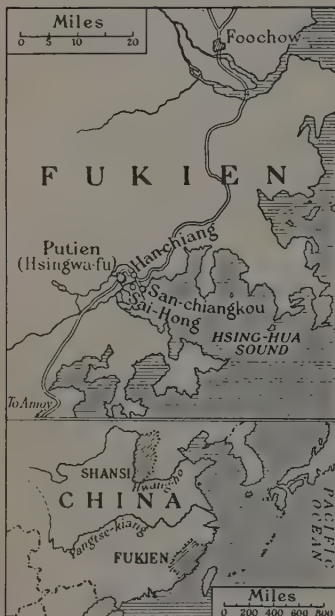
A raft usually carries three or four cormorants, though the number varies in different places, and to see six or seven rafts each with its complement of cormorants is one of the most interesting and familiar scenes which China provides.

Of the many ways of catching fish this is perhaps the most spectacular. Sometimes a net is spread between two rafts and the other rafts form a semicircle opposite the net but some distance from it. The fishermen then push the birds from the rafts and off they go after the fish. To scare the fish the fishermen by a movement of their bodies jerk the rafts and disturb the surface of the water; they also beat the water with their poles, meanwhile crying out "Oh-er! Oh-er! Oh-er!" This animated performance is further enlivened by the cormorants bobbing up with fish in their beaks and bringing them obediently to the rafts. Most of the fish which escape the cormorants are driven into the nets, so that after one stretch of water has been worked over, the fishermen call in their birds, which sit on the rafts while they are poled to another stretch where fishing begins again.



2

3



Stanford, London

4



*Mr Lin's legacy to Sai Hong, a pair of cormorants, provides through their progeny the village's main source of livelihood. (Opposite) 1. Four bamboos to a raft: just room for a man and his fisher-birds. 2. *Phalacrocorax* shows his paces. 3. All but one aboard, with full equipment: fish-basket, large net, landing net, pole and cormorants. In accordance with cormorant custom, the three who have left the water spread their wings to dry in the morning breeze. 4. Off to the fishing grounds. (Right) Proud birds, the day's work done. And now for a supper of bean curd!*



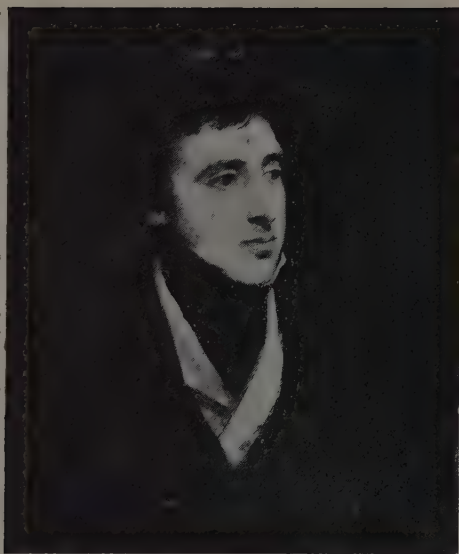
*Photographs by the Author*

Cormorants are expert swimmers; unlike penguins, they do not use their wings under water, but propel themselves by their legs alone. When under the water the head is held back so that the neck resembles the letter S, but in taking a fish the neck is extended. An ordinary bird can take a fish weighing about one pound; if heavier fish are taken other birds will come to assist, so that three birds often help to land a large fish which one or two birds could not manage.

Birds which can catch fish in their native element must be extraordinarily agile in the water, but the remarkable feature of these cormorants is that they not only catch fish, they also return to their owner's raft with their prey. When the fishermen were questioned as to how it was the birds brought the fish to them, they said that they recognized the encouraging shouts of their masters, and that they had been trained to this special kind of work for generations.

The cormorants at Sai Hong breed in captivity. From four to ten eggs are laid in a clutch and are hatched out under a hen

after an incubation period of twenty-three days. When the chicks first appear they are entirely devoid of feathers, but they develop quickly, and when forty or fifty days old are taken out to learn their parents' profession. Their wings are clipped to prevent them from flying away, otherwise they are at liberty to go where they will. Occasionally they stray, but as a rule they keep with the flock and are seldom lost. When the day's work is done and the cormorants have been carried home, they are given their one and only meal. This, singularly enough, does not consist mainly of fish, but of bean curd, about a pound of it for each bird with a few small fishes thrown in. Cormorants in their wild state live purely on fish, but for the tame birds a diet of bean curd is evidently suitable. They are seldom ill, they appear to be in good condition and live from twenty-five to thirty years. In some respects their life is almost enviable. They are well cared for, they do useful work, they have plenty of exercise in the open air, swim and dive to their hearts' content, and evidently enjoy themselves.



# Bonington and France

by C. H. PEACOCK

I REMEMBER travelling in a slow train across Northern France and wondering on that journey what constituted the spirit of place. Was it climate, scenery, history, tradition? An indefinable combination of them all? I was returning from Italy where these things make themselves felt like a subtle and persistent presence, and to the rhythm of the train a fragment of Proust kept recurring in my mind . . . "il y a quelque chose d'individuel dans les lieux. . . ."

This element of individuality in places is the factor which shapes the character and thought of nations, though its effect may be only visible over a vast period of time. Out of climate and soil sprang the culture and legends of ancient Greece; and the myths of Scandinavia are the products of its dark forests and overcast skies. On the human personality the influence of place is like a deep and potent spell, and in the work of the painter, the musician and the writer, we see the manifestations of its power. It was this question of the creative mind and its environment which occupied my thoughts as the French countryside slipped by the carriage window, an endless succession of clustered towns with their needle spires and the poplar avenues converging on them, like wheel spokes centering on the hub. That day I noted in my diary: "Environment is the seed-bed of ideas. Some minds have achieved greatness in art not by straining at horizons,

but by narrowing their range in order to understand profoundly a single fragment of locality. Dante, Cézanne, Dickens, Tchekov—all were geniuses of place."

I might have added to the list the name of R. P. Bonington, that young painter of genius who made the landscape of France an element of inspiration in his art. 'Was it a quality of light or a particular combination of colour which drew him so often to the coasts and countryside of Normandy? Here there isn't the obvious magic of the South, the landscape of blues and ochres which has so often been the inspiration of artists. On the whole it has a distinctly English character. The country in fact from St Omer and Lille to Beauvais is similar in structure to Salisbury Plain; and the Norman invaders coming ashore at Hastings would find themselves in a land closely resembling their own. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of Northern France is its strong architectural tradition. The loveliest of French cathedrals are grouped in the fertile country of the North-West—Amiens, Reims, Beauvais, Notre Dame of Paris, Chartres, Orléans. In Normandy, so rich in ancient monuments, Bonington found the thing which most appealed to him, the romantic and legendary past. Here it existed as an unbroken tradition, not only in picturesque towns and churches but in the people themselves. For him the spell of place lay in the glamour of its historical associations.



And in that landscape and coast scenery, at first sight so reminiscent of England, he discovered those tones and shades which had for him such special significance. In his short life Normandy was one of the decisive influences.

Born in 1802 at Arnold, near Nottingham, Bonington first set foot in France in 1817 or 1818 when his family migrated from Nottingham to Calais. His father, whose optimistic temperament had a good deal in common with that of Mr Micawber, went to France with ideas of erecting a lace-making factory which would restore the family fortunes. Financially, the venture turned out a fair success, artistically the results were startling. At Calais young Bonington, who had previously shown some aptitude for art, began to develop a serious taste for painting. By a stroke of chance the artist F. L. T. Francia, who had spent some time in England and had absorbed the tradition of English water-colour, was then resident in Calais and became the friend and art master of young Bonington. From him Bonington learned the technique which Francia had in his turn learned from Girtin. So through an intermediary the principles of English water-colour painting were transmitted to Bonington to form an enduring basis for his art.

Meanwhile between Bonington and his father a crisis was developing. It was not old Bonington's plan that his son should devote himself to art and he forbade any more lessons. The boy then took matters into his own hands. With a letter of introduction in his pocket he set off to Dunkirk to seek advice from Francia's friend and patron, Morel. It was a bold and fruitful move. Morel wanting perhaps to shift responsibility, or acting on a flash of inspiration, sent Bonington on to Paris with an introduction to the young painter Eugène Delacroix. Of that first meeting Delacroix says: "When first I saw him, I myself was quite young . . . and was making studies in the gallery of the Louvre. . . . I saw a tall youth in a short coat who also was silently making water-colour studies, for the most part from Flemish landscapes. Already he had a surprising skill in this method, which was in those days an English novelty."

From studying at the Louvre, Bonington went on to the Ecole des Beaux Arts, and later gained admission to the art school of Baron Gros. It was his water-colour painting—the "English Novelty" as Delacroix termed it—which firmly established Bonington's reputation. These works, which today still impress us with their brilliance and freshness,

must have seemed miraculously beautiful when first done. But Bonington's genius, unlike that of Girtin, was not to be confined to one branch of art. In oil painting his mastery, though more slowly acquired, was beginning to show itself.

The feeling that he was now artistically fully equipped may have prompted Bonington to leave Paris and search for subjects in a wider field. In the Salon of 1822 two paintings of Havre and Lillebonne were results of his first excursion. Other such journeys followed with Paris still his centre. In 1823 he travelled through Northern France, painting coast scenes between Havre and Calais, and turning inland to seek out such picturesque medieval buildings as the Abbey of St Omer, the painting of which now hangs in the City Art Gallery, Nottingham. Of all Bonington's works, it seems to me in many ways the most satisfying. Light and spacious, it throws into beautiful emphasis the exquisite proportions of the Gothic, revealing in these architectural fragments the structural motif of the style: the graceful pillars holding in balance the springing tension of the arches.

In the Wallace Collection there is a picture of the Tour du Marché at Bergues which provides an interesting contrast with the painting of St Omer. In the second picture the great tower dominates the composition and the foreground with its closely-placed figures suggests all the bustle and colour of a French market town. In mood it is highly-keyed and restless.

These two paintings represent two aspects of Bonington's character which are apparent in his art; a tendency towards classicism with its emphasis upon space and placing; and on the other hand a strong inclination towards romantic detail and exuberance. In his best work, it seems to me, the classical element is predominant with the romantic side expressing itself in the free handling of colour and the freshness of vision. In such paintings as the Normandy landscape in the National Gallery, or the Château of the Duchesse de Berri, from the collection of Sir Martyn Beckett, there is a quality of spaciousness which derives from the classical tradition.

This division of sensibility was characteristic of all early 19th-century art, and from the rivalry of classical and romantic theories great things were achieved. In painting a cleavage of the ways became dramatically plain at the famous Paris salon of 1824 where pictures by Lawrence, Bonington and Constable were exhibited. There, it might be said, modern art was born, and the man







Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery. Photograph by A. C. Cooper

Two pictures which alike draw inspiration from the ancient monuments of Normandy that so appealed to Buntington, yet represent different aspects of his character. The Abbey of St Bertin, St Omer, a dignified and balanced composition, reflects the classical element in his art. Contrast with this the rambling and ruffled appearance of the Market Tower at Eberburg, near Dinkelsbühl, one of Buntington's early paintings, in which the great tower dominates a scene of battle and ruin.



*National Gallery. Photograph from W. F. Mansell*



*Photograph from Messrs Thos. Agnew & Sons*



mainly responsible for that event was Bonington's friend Delacroix.

In 1822 Delacroix had exhibited his first canvas, *Dante et Virgile aux Enfers*, a work which showed clearly the influence of Rubens, with a hint of Michelangelo. Its success was instantaneous. Critics praised it, and so great was public enthusiasm that the French Government purchased the work for 2000 francs. In the *Massacre de Scio* two years later the influence of Rubens still holds, but something new appears: there is a naturalistic handling of light that derives from Constable.

The effect of Constable on Delacroix was to crystallize into open revolt his instinctive distrust of classicism. Through the greens of Constable's landscape he saw new and exciting possibilities in colour. In his journal he notes: "What Constable says of the green of his fields can be applied to all the other tones as well".

In 1825 he visited England to study further this revolutionary technique, and in one of his letters he writes: "Grey is the enemy of all painting. . . . Let us banish from our palette all earth colours."

Opinions differ as to the extent of English influence upon the new movement. Some hold that in France the forces of revolt were already stirring before the advent of Constable's *Hay Wain*. That may be true, but it was the triple alliance of Bonington, Delacroix and Constable that made the new ideas so decisively victorious.

The exhibition of 1824 seems to have drawn Delacroix and Bonington into closer company. The gain was mutual. Bonington's English background helped Delacroix to a clearer understanding of the new theories; and for Bonington the companionship of the Frenchman meant the acquisition of technical knowledge, as well as access to one of the keenest intellects of the day.

In 1825 Delacroix and Bonington were both in England and they were travelling companions on the return journey to France. Later in Paris the two painters shared a studio. This contact with Delacroix had one notable effect on Bonington; it developed further the strong historical sense which the ancient towns and monuments of France had already awakened. The result was that Bonington now began to emulate Delacroix in painting pictures based on themes and characters from literature and history. This new phase of his art is represented by such works as *Anne Page and Slender* or *Francis I and Marguerite of Navarre*, now in the Wallace Collection.

For all their brilliance, there is something



Wallace Collection. Photograph from W. F. Mansell

Francis I and Marguerite of Navarre: a historical picture revealing Delacroix's influence. The Heath Scene in Normandy and the Château of the Duchesse de Berri, shown opposite, with their open foregrounds and wide expanses of sky, have a classical spaciousness

not quite convincing about these character paintings. They are not, one feels, the best of Bonington, but rather experiments in a borrowed mode. With Delacroix the case was different. He was, as one critic puts it, "museum bred", and his love for the historical and exotic was rooted deeply in his nature. His intellect was superior to Bonington's and he possessed a more developed critical faculty. For Bonington this excursion into another branch of art proved highly profitable. It brought his name to the notice of many collectors who cared little for his landscapes. On his visit to London in 1825, he took the opportunity of studying the Meyrick collection of armour, thus laying in a stock of material which would prove useful in the production of period and historical paintings. On this visit he came under the spell of Turner and renewed acquaintance with the landscapes of Constable. On his return to

*To Constable may be traced a note of naturalism which appears in Bonington's later paintings, as in the handling of the trees in his sketch of a Normandy Farm.*



*Mrs A. A. Cameron collection*

*The fresh individuality of his best work is well displayed in the Normandy Peasant Girls, a water-colour drawing in which Bonington's mastery shows itself in every line. The clear, broadly-handled washes give a wonderful effect of sunlight*



*British Museum*



France the results of this journey were apparent in paintings that show a Turner-esque diffusion of light, as in the *Landscape with Timber and Waggon*, now included in the Wallace Collection.

From Constable he learned much about skies and in the work of this period a new note of naturalism appears, especially in the smaller sketches which are often magnificently atmospheric. Two such examples, both from private collections, are *A Normandy Farm* and the beautiful little *French Coast Scene*, so reminiscent of Constable in its contrast of light and storm. Of his larger paintings the famous *Parterre d'Eau, Versailles*, in the Louvre, with its sunlit spaciousness and its wide rolling sky, represents the climax of this tendency towards a closer rendering of nature.

In 1826 Bonington went to Italy for a short time, and in the following year he made another journey to England. A vast amount of work characterizes these last years, as if he were trying to cram into a few months the output of a lifetime. By the summer of 1828 tuberculosis in an advanced form had manifested itself. As a measure of cure he planned another sketching tour of Normandy, but failing strength prevented his setting out. A dying man, he was taken in slow stages to London to undergo treatment at the hands of a quack doctor, but nothing could be done, and on September 23, 1828, after lingering a few weeks, he died.

So, like a candle, the young life burnt itself out, leaving behind some impressive art and the legend of a genius. With the great who have died young, with Chatterton, Keats, Marlowe, Girtin, Bonington, Géricault, there is the temptation to confuse probability with fact and take for granted the general line of their development. There is an irresistible temptation to compare Bonington with Keats, and in one respect the comparison is illuminating. With Keats the crisis of his art had been surmounted; with Bonington the test had yet to come. There was for him the dangerous lure of Turner and all the pitfalls of historical painting. If one speculates as to what Bonington might have done, one is faced with the question, Had he strength of character equal to his artistic powers?

It was probably a disadvantage that everything came so easily to him, that he reached mastery without the preliminary labour. In this connection it is worth quoting Constable. "Can you give me [he writes] a print or two of Bonington's to convince you that I don't wholly overlook him. But there is a moral feeling in Art as everything else. It is not

right in a young man to assume great dash—great completion—without study—or pains."

Constable raises here the question of integrity, and in the case of Bonington it has a special relevance. For if one sometimes feels a doubt about him it is on the ground that he lacked discipline and self-criticism. Without these safeguards genius may fritter itself away in wasted effort.

Having said this much, one can more justly measure the achievement. If there is a hint of weakness, the qualities that offset it are dazzlingly impressive. The "great dash", the "great completion" that Constable half complains of, are not things assumed; they are the very essence of the man. In every branch of his art Bonington possessed an amazing fluency. Greater study might have produced a deeper, more fundamental art, but for the mere acquiring of technique it was unnecessary. Bonington was one of those artists who are born fully equipped, who absorb influences and scarcely show a trace of them. Looking at the best of his work, one is struck by its individuality. It may bear here and there a faint trace of Constable or Delacroix, or a generous acknowledgment to the Old Masters, but it remains nevertheless beautifully fresh and personal.

In his pencil studies this personal quality is again the keynote. Here, it seems to me, some element of Bonington's background creeps in. The strong sense of pattern, the texture of the drawing in which the points of shadow are like knots anchoring the delicately flowing line—these, I feel, belong to the tradition of lace design, an inheritance from the county where Bonington was born.

For the rest, it was mainly from the landscape and coast-lines of Northern France that his inspiration came, from the countryside of Normandy and the green banks of the Seine. The spirit of place exerted on him an un-failing influence, drawing him again and again to the towns of Normandy where the ancient buildings delighted his romantic spirit. The early 19th century, one must remember, was an age that had re-discovered history. The past was seen as an exciting, colourful pageant and its monuments were regarded with the kind of awe which in our own day is reserved for the latest theories of science. In France, more than in any other European country (with the possible exception of Spain), the past merges into the present to form an unbroken process of civilization. So the old towns and buildings that Bonington loved to paint were not merely monuments of other ages, not relics of a dead history, but part of a national culture and tradition.

# On Canal Boats in War Time

by C. M. RAMSAY

*Miss Ramsay, a New Zealander and a graduate of Otago University, has for the past two years been working boats on the Grand Union Canal between London, Birmingham and Coventry. Her war-time job has shown her a side of English life which everyone sees but few have shared*

THERE is an extraordinary fascination about canals and canal boats, and indeed if it were not so I cannot believe that we women 'trainees' who have taken on this type of war work could have stuck it. To the onlookers who hang over bridges on a summer's evening it is all very charming, and it is hardly surprising that they smile down at us and say "What a lovely life!" though at the end of a full and probably tiring day we do not always feel inclined to agree with them. The long narrow boats—they are 71 feet 6 inches by 7 feet beam—are gay and attractive, especially those which have the traditional roses

and castles painted on the cabin doors and a neat little cluster of roses on the butty stern. White webbing and cordage on the fore ends, kept clean by energetic scrubbing; brass bands on the chimneys and exhaust pipe; in the cabins painted china plates, lace curtains and innumerable brass knobs, brass rails and a highly polished stove: these are typical possessions of the regular boat people.

Boats work in pairs. The motor boat (usually called the 'motor'), which is propelled by an 18-h.p. Diesel engine, tows the butty boat, which has no engine and is practically the same as the old type of



horse-drawn boat. Both boats have cabins; that in the butty is the larger and the more pleasant to live in. It is about nine feet by six and has a narrow side bed and a wide bed at the back which lets down from the boat's side. There are two large drawers, four lockers, a table locker, in which food is kept, and a drawer beneath for cutlery. Outside in the hatches there is another locker in which we keep more food and cooking utensils. It is all very compact and though the space is small there is plenty of room for one's possessions and everything is well within reach.

Three women trainees make up the crew of a pair of boats, two dwelling in the butty cabin and one in the motor cabin. The regular boaters make the butty cabin the family home when their children are small. Older children, or the mate who is not one of the family, sleep in the motor cabin. It is not uncommon for a man and wife and possibly five small children all to sleep in the butty cabin. We have never been able to work out quite how they do it.

Those who come on the canal, or the 'cut' as it is always called, as trainees, do well to

copy the boaters' methods both of handling their craft and of looking after them. Most of them keep their boats remarkably smart and clean, and this can be done only by making use of every spare moment. To a trainee like myself, it is fascinating to watch the regular boat people at work. Their movements are unhurried and their actions well timed. When they bring their boats into a lock they handle their ropes with an easy dexterity and know to a nicety just how long they must watch the boats and when they can leave them for those few precious moments to continue the preparing of the midday meal, polish a bit more brass or rinse their washing in the canal. All these jobs are done while steering the butty boat. Until the trainee learns how to steer and cook or wash at the same time she will find it difficult to fit these jobs in, as actual off time is very limited.

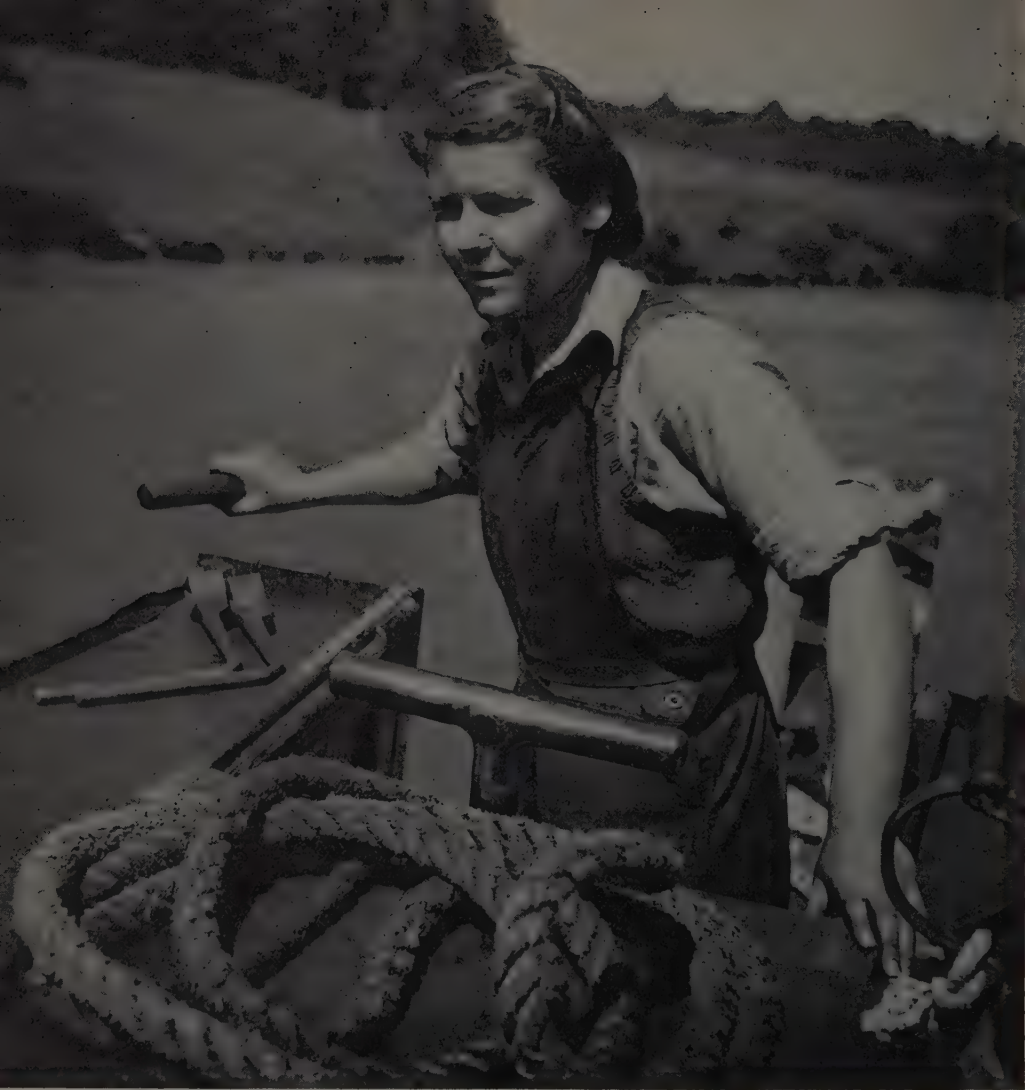
You do not tie up either to prepare or eat meals. On days when you are going through locks continuously you have your plate before you on the cabin top and eat and steer at the same time. On those more leisurely days when you have long stretches of flat country, long 'pounds' as they are called, you take it in

*Leisure on canal boats is rare and 'time off' an infrequent event. These two photographs were taken on high ground at Marsworth Locks, Hertfordshire, during the acute water shortage last summer, which caused frequent stoppages until enough water had been pumped up to allow boats to proceed. An opportunity was given to do odd jobs such as (Right) scrubbing the step removed from the open doorway of the butty cabin hatches. The tiller is always put in upside down when a boat is tied up*

*All photographs by A. Pritchard*







*Steering the butty boat on a long 'pound'. Variations in towing technique are complicated. In this case the butty is being towed on a long rope run from her bow to the stern of the motor boat, so that the T-shaped towing stud in front of the steerer is not in use. It, however, and the two windlasses, are ready to hand for the next lock*

turns to go below and eat. I confess I have been guilty of tying up for lunch, and also of stopping in a lock for twenty minutes to eat it, on a cold and rainy day when the prospect of having my food washed or blown from my plate was not a cheerful one; but it is bad

policy and always leads to some sort of trouble later in the day.

If you want to travel peacefully through lock country you must work fast and you must on no account waste time. This is our chief trouble when we are new to the work, for



*Steering the motor boat on a short 'pound'. Here the towing line runs from a stud on the stern of the motor to the mast of the butty and back through running blocks to the stud on the butty cabin top in front of the butty steerer. The bicycle enables the third member of the crew, as 'lockwheeler', to go ahead and prepare the next lock*

with the best will in the world things go wrong and a great deal of time is lost.

The principle of locking is as follows. The usual method of towing the butty into locks is on a line about 130 feet in length which runs along the top of the butty, through running

blocks and a pulley block, and is controlled by the butty steerer, who checks it round a stud on the butty cabin top, and lets it out or pulls it in as the situation requires. It has a noose at one end which hangs from the pulley block and is picked up by the motor steerer,



*Working downhill. The motor is in the lock with the gate shut behind her; the butty is running in. When she has run abreast of the motor, the 'paddle', seen on the nearer gate, will be wound up with a windlass to let the water run out through a sluice in the floor of the lock*

*Working uphill. The motor is not far enough out of the lock to have picked up the butty, from which the towing line will be taken and slipped over the stud at the motor steerer's feet. The butty steerer has the line round the stud in front of her ready to pay it out*





as the motor leaves the lock, and put over a stud on the stern of the motor. The motor steerer takes the motor into locks at a speed calculated to give the butty enough way to follow. The motor is checked by the engine being put astern, and the butty is checked by the butty steerer jumping off with a rope and taking two or three turns with it round a bollard on the lock's side.

Now all this takes a lot of practice, and as all the eighty-nine locks from London to Braunston are different, owing to mud, draw of the water and its depth, and as, furthermore, one has to allow for the draught of one's boats and the way they are loaded, one learns something new every day. As the boaters say "You're never done larning," and, watching our feeble efforts with something akin to dismay, "You'll never boat unless you're barn to it." However on many occasions we do enter locks perfectly. The motor goes in at the right speed, enabling the motor steerer to climb up the gate, shut it and walk up to the paddle at the other end of the lock, which is wound up by a windlass, opening a sluice in the floor of the lock and enabling the water to pass through. Thus locks are filled when boats are working uphill and emptied when they are working downhill. Before the motor steerer draws her 'paddle', the butty has glided into the lock alongside the motor and the butty steerer has checked it and shut the gate behind it. The butty steerer then runs along her side of the lock and draws the 'paddle' on that side. Then you both sit down and rest for a few minutes while the lock fills or empties, as the case may be, or else rush down to the cabin and do something useful. The third member of the crew is ahead preparing the next lock.

There are numerous ways in which things can go wrong. If the motor steerer makes a bad job of getting the motor into the lock it will probably swing across and the butty will run into it and jam. The motor steerer will then attempt to bring the motor astern and straighten it up. The butty, having lost all way, will have to be pulled in on the rope, which is hard work and tends to make one feel very cross indeed. It takes a philosophic temperament to emerge from a series of these misfortunes without an exchange of acrimonious abuse between the respective steerers. In canal boating, cooperation between the two steerers is essential for peaceful running.

Our greatest trouble, when working a continuous flight of locks, is to keep ahead of the boats behind. Some days we find ourselves quite alone and everything is pleasant and peaceful. Another day we may be over-

taken by a fast working crew and we usually feel bound to "loose them by" as they say. This is rather a nuisance; it loses us about 10-15 minutes and gives us a lot of trouble in keeping our boats off the mud banks on the sides of the canal. However, boaters work on a piece rate, earning so much freight per trip, so the faster they work the more they earn, and if you want to keep the goodwill of the boaters it is no good hindering them. Our greatest trial is when there are several pairs of boats behind us, as by the time we have "loosed by" our immediate followers the next pair is upon us too, and it is difficult to decide what to do. Though we are paid a minimum weekly wage and are not dependent on time to the same extent as the boaters are, we are expected to make our trips in a reasonable time, and we really cannot afford to give in to every boater who happens to be behind us. We have some fierce arguments on this subject and on the whole the boaters are not displeased when we refuse to give in to them. A really good fight often precedes a firm friendship; we sometimes feel that it acts as an introduction.

It is extraordinary that with such a slow-moving form of transport—in the deepest water loaded boats do barely five miles an hour—there should be so much hustle and bustle, but this is largely because there are so many locks. The leading pair of boats has a good chance of having a good 'road'. That means that the locks will be made ready for them by the boats approaching from the opposite direction. That is why if you happen to have a good 'road' it is fatal to lose any time, because the pair behind are bound to know it and if they catch up they will demand to be "loosed by" in no uncertain language. Some of the more intelligent boat people "keep going steady" and are philosophic as to whether they have the locks ready or not. Others will do anything to get ahead of everyone else and especially of us "learners" or "them women trainees", as we are called contemptuously by those who dislike us or resent our intrusion into their lives. Happily for us many are very friendly and give us plenty of sound advice in a charmingly diffident manner. If it had not been for their help in many sticky moments, and their tolerance of us when we were completely new to the 'cut', we should never have been able to run boats on the canal at all. I have had boaters waste an hour extracting from our propeller coils of rope, which never should have got there, but somehow did. I have had them tinkering with my engine when it developed some minor trouble I did not

understand. I have even known a boater who exchanged motors with me when mine was too heavily loaded and his knowledge of the canal enabled him to make it move whereas I could not keep it off the bottom. It is kindnesses such as these which make up for our constant troubles and help us to forget the unnecessary physical strain caused by our own inexperience.

In the very cold spell last January our worst trouble was frozen ropes, which, when

untied, appeared to stand and look at us defiantly, or lay in incongruous shapes on the cabin top. For a week they never thawed; the short rope which we towed on was continually coated with ice, and the noose which goes over the motor stern stud froze stiff between locks and had to be levered off. Progress was very slow, as it was necessary to clear the ice from the locks before the boats entered them, otherwise they became jammed. It is unpractical to wear gloves when boating,

*Coal is a staple cargo on the 'cut'. The motor boat on the left is loaded and the girl on it is trimming the cargo with her feet. The butty boat on the right is still being loaded: the coal may be seen dropping in from the chute. The girl standing on the boat is working the boat back so that the coal falls in the right place*



except for steering, as everything one handles is wet, and wet gloves are worse than none at all. Consequently our hands became chapped and painful. But apart from the difficulties which it entailed, the icy spell was an interesting experience, and, as usual, the boaters came nobly to our assistance. On New Year's Day we awoke to find our boats firmly wedged in ice; in fact, we could with a little caution walk round them. Not being at all sure what to do, as this was our first experi-

ence of a freeze-up, we did nothing and in due course some boaters came up behind us. The oldest boy of the family took charge and insisted on taking our motor for us for the rest of the day. He gave us a great deal of advice in a somewhat apologetic manner and thoroughly enjoyed showing us how clever he was. His family, who were thus deprived of an extra mate, seemed to take it for granted that he should help us.

Later in the month, after days of continued

*Both the boats are now loaded and both the girls are 'clothing up'. When coal is the cargo, this process involves raising the tarpaulins rolled and tied with strings on the gunwales. With more perishable cargoes, the boats are fully clothed up as shown in the lower picture on page 80. The boards, on which the crew moves between stern and bow, have to be bolted firmly into position*





low temperatures, the ice became too thick for the boats to break for themselves, and we were all delayed until ice-breakers could get through and make the road for us. It was much pleasanter being frozen in than trying to force our way along, and the local inn had continuous patronage. We had to keep a water-hole alongside us to throw our rubbish down, and breaking the ice over it became more strenuous each day; but, apart from this inconvenience, we were fairly warm and comfortable. Coal is easily come by on the 'cut' as it is one of our staple cargoes, and with a good fire the cabins can be made much warmer than most people's houses in winter.

The pains and pleasures of professional boating are just about evenly balanced. We get tired of living in cramped conditions, of perpetually dirty hands, of dinners falling off the primus and being eaten more or less off the mat, of having to fetch every drop of water from taps and heat it up in kettles, of attempting, in a small handbowl, to wash oneself clean from the collected dirt of a day, and of trying to concoct a satisfying midday meal on present-day rations. It is horrible when the rain pours down all day, our feet are sodden and water trickles down our sleeves when we move our arms. Bitterly cold winds beat on us unmercifully and our only comfort is the warmth which rises from the cabin stove.

On the other hand it is very pleasant to be able to lie in bed in the morning, by which I mean 6 A.M., and put the kettle on the oil stove and light the fire without having to get up. It is easy to throw on one's clothes, let go the ropes and be off in the first light, starting one's day without any of the preliminary transport difficulties of the city worker.

Though it is monotonous following the same route—London—Birmingham—Coventry and back to London is our usual trip—yet it is never quite the same. We work a 12–14 hour day (the boaters work considerably longer hours) and we can arrange our trip in such a way as to tie up at different places. There is always an inn near the recognized 'tie-ups', and there we drink our pints with the boaters and sometimes play darts or skittles.

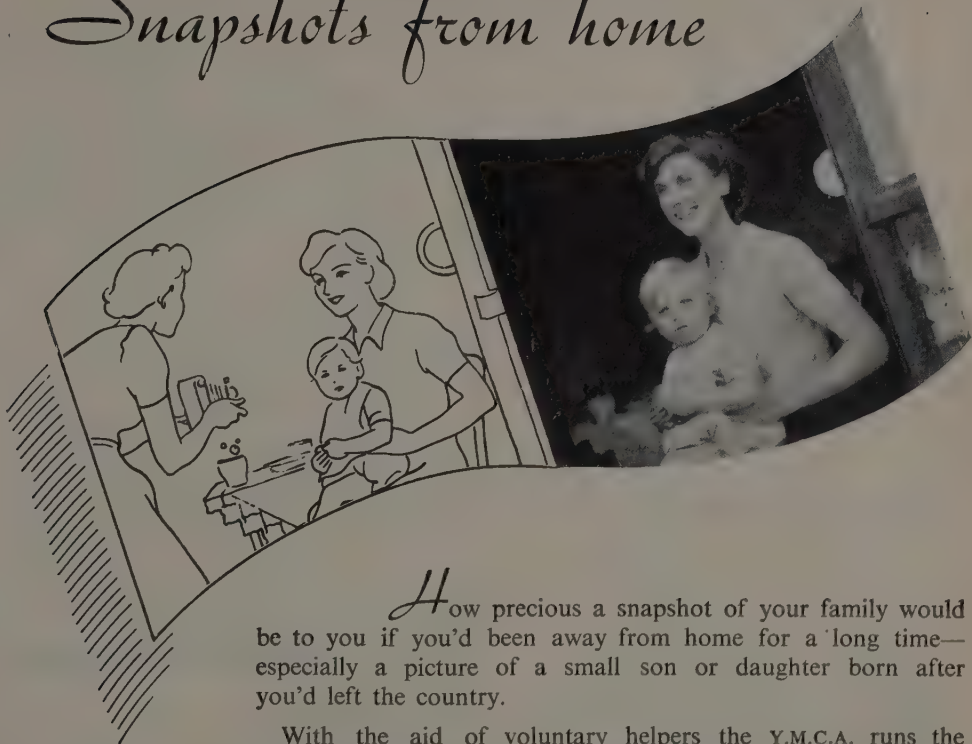
The length of our working day depends somewhat on the time of the year. Spring and autumn are the best seasons for boating. The temperature is just about right for so much continued exercise, and the hours of daylight are sufficient to allow for a good day's run. In winter we run after dark or before dawn, when there is a moon or a clear

starlit sky, because we get bored with each other's company if trips take too long. Last summer there was an acute water shortage, which caused frequent stoppages on the higher levels of the canal. This meant that we would be held up for a day or longer until enough water had been pumped up to allow us to proceed. It was very enjoyable having a day off in pleasant surroundings and it gave us a chance to explore the surrounding country, which we pass through so often and yet know not at all, and to pick the wild flowers which grow on the canal-side, always so tantalizingly out of reach. It also gave us an opportunity to do those odd jobs which it is difficult to find time to fit in: washing and mending clothes, cleaning up the engine and splicing ropes. There is always something that needs attention on a pair of boats.

It is a hard life and a strenuous one, but on the whole the regular boat people seem to like it. They have done it all their lives and are used to it. They are for the most part born on the boats and their friends and relations live on the water too. They organize their runs so that they can meet each other. They have an intelligence system of their own by which they always seem to know where everyone else is. Though many of them have small cottages somewhere 'on shore', yet their boats are their real home and their pride.

Looking back on our life on the boats we shall have many vivid recollections. I shall remember gliding peacefully along on sunny days, through lovely country; soft morning mists rising up from the plain below as we worked our way down Stoke Bruerne Locks in the dawn; the brilliant blue of the kingfishers flitting in the branches of the trees overhanging the water; the busy paddling of the water rats, their whiskers prone on the surface of the water, as they came unexpectedly up against our boat's side, and, disconcerted for a moment, scuffled around and then dived below and reappeared on the other side; the frolics of young lambs and kids; hoar frost on the fir trees on a bleak winter's day; running in brilliant moonlight through a countryside white with snow; the boat people's children, their friendliness, and their unwitting patronage of the amateur; roaring fires in canal-side inns on winter evenings; endless disagreements and vicissitudes, infuriating at the time, but humorous in retrospect. And I shall never forget the interminable mud and the boredom of long dreary 'pounds' on cold, bleak days when three miles an hour seemed to be a most unsatisfactory rate of progress.

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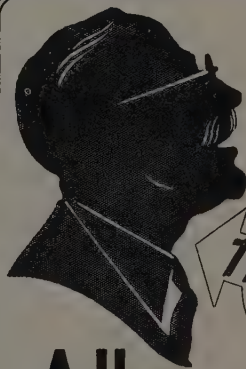
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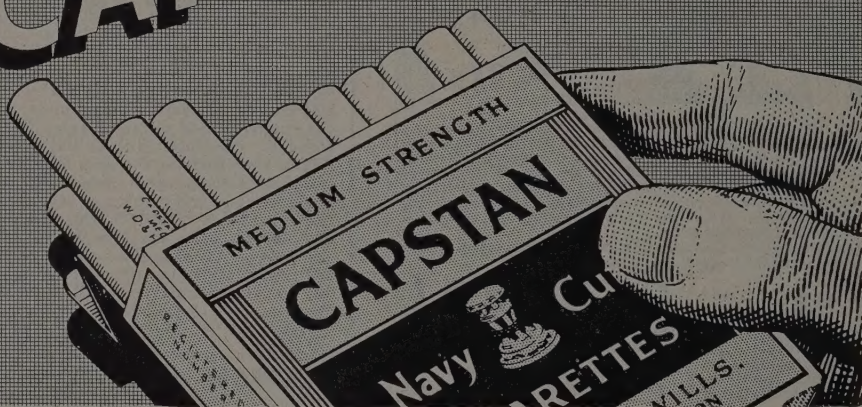
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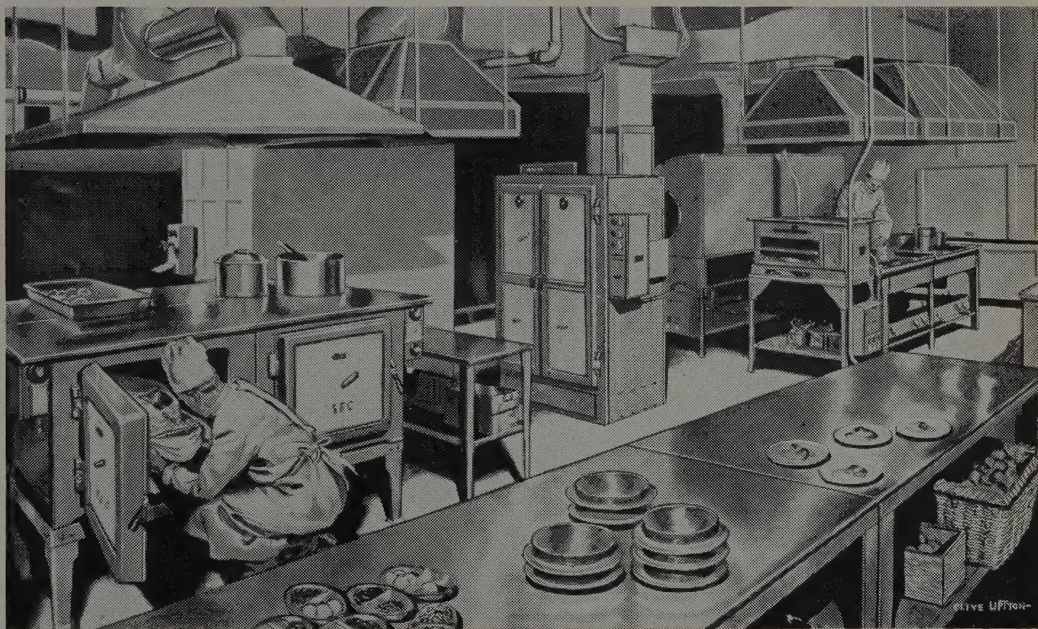
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